The public service also had degenerated a great deal for want of a responsible form of Government.

In order to remedy these evils a Government that was responsible to the people should be established in the country.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Viswanatha Pillai, I will give a collective reply on the subject of responsible Government to all the members who may speak now on the subject.

188. Constitutional reforms.

MR. P. N. MADHAVAN PILLAI (*Member, Trivandrum taluk, Group I*) prefaced his representation by expressing the gratitude of the country towards Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao, the founder of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly. He then said that in British India, the people were agitating for "Dominion Status". While that part of India was progressing in this manner, it was not proper that the Indian States should remain unchanged. In respect of education, Travancore was in the fore-front of Indian States and was quite fit for responsible Government. The establishment of such a Government would only redound to the credit of the Ruler. It would also help to put down the communal quarrels which were vitiating the political atmosphere of the country. The constitution and powers of the Legislative Council should therefore be revised as also of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly. An Executive Council should also be established.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Madhavan Pillai, I will deal collectively with all the representations on the subject of constitutional changes after all the members have spoken on the subject.

189. Constitutional reforms with reference to the existing self-governing institutions in the State.

MR. V. SANKARA MENON (*Member, Municipal Council, Trivandrum*) pointed out that the Municipal Councils Regulation made no distinction between big municipalities like that of Trivandrum with a revenue of a few lakhs of rupees and small municipalities like that of Colachel or Haripad whose income did not exceed a few hundreds of rupees. The result was that the efficient working of the Trivandrum municipality was hampered in many ways. It was highly necessary that the constitution of the Council should be re-modelled on up-to-date lines. There should be a Chief Executive Officer appointed for the municipality, while the council should have the right of electing its own president. The functions of the two officers should be carefully allocated. The Council should be enabled to co-operate with the Government in the matter of water-supply, street lighting, drainage etc. The grant formerly paid to the municipality should be restored. If this was not practicable, the municipality should be allowed a portion of the land and abkari revenue derived by Government from the municipal area.

A committee should be appointed to investigate and report on the feasibility of bringing out a uniformity in municipal laws and proceedure.

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Village Panchayat judges should be appointed by election instead of by nomination.

The Village Panchayat Regulation should be brought into force at once.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Sankara Menon, you dwelt at some length on the stability of the major municipalities like that of Trivandrum. It is true that, as you remark, there is only one set of rules and only one Regulation applicable alike to a capital city like Trivandrum and the lesser municipalities, like Colachel and Haripad.

Something has to be done to remedy these defects which now arise out of inelastic rules. I have been studying the position in respect of Trivandrum, Alleppey and Nagercoil and before long I hope to take up the question seriously.

You referred to the withdrawal of the Government subvention to the municipalities. I did so deliberately because I found that most of the municipalities—the Trivandrum Municipality being a striking example of this—were hoarding money. Considerable sums have been saved out of the incomes and the revenues. It appeared to me that municipalities think of themselves as bodies meant to collect money for some object in the remote distance or possibly with no particular object at all. It is to check this tendency that I have stopped the subvention. Wherever the funds are properly utilised for the municipalities and wherever the municipalities find that they have not sufficient means to supplement income, you can rest assured that the Government will not hesitate to put their hands into their pockets to help them.

You touched upon the Panchayat Courts. You said that the nomination of judges to the Panchayat Courts is not satisfactory. It is not that the nominations have been altogether bad in the past; but the making out of preliminary lists from which selections have to be made had fallen into unwholesome ways; that is, it was left to the Proverthikar to make the preliminary lists. That is now changed and the Peishkars are now giving their personal attention to the matter. You will now find that nominees are all most suitable to the office to which they are appointed. You must not infer that because a man is not a vakil he is not fit to be on the Bench of the Panchayat. In my opinion these honorary courts should be drawn from people who are unconnected with the Bar. It is only sound common sense that is wanted in these places and we do not want too many complexities in the administration of law which has become a serious fault in Travancore. We want men who possess common sense and who are not afraid to exercise that common sense for the speedy disposal of law which is what is wanted by the simpler folk of the State. Therefore you will find that these honorary judges now consist largely of respectable landlords and men of standing in the neighbourhood.

In the matter of Village Panchayats you heard what I have to say to two or three members on the same subject previously.

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